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TO: Wayne Witzell,
Protected Resources Branch

FROM: Dennis Lee,
SEFSC Observer Coordinator

SUBJECT: Longline gear Incidental Take summary for quarter 3, 2004.

The Miami Laboratory Pelagic Observer Program (POP) is providing you with a summary report of the incidental take of marine mammals, turtles, and birds that have been recorded by observers aboard longline vessels for July 1 to September 30, 2004. The POP completed an overall coverage rate of 7.3% of selected pelagic longline fleet for this quarter (Table 1). During the quarter, observers recorded to 35 sea turtles (21-leatherbacks-alive; 14-loggerheads-alive), in addition to three (3) marine mammals (1-common dolphin-alive; 1-Risso's dolphin-alive; 1-pilot whale-alive) and five (5) seabirds (4-greater shearwaters-dead and 1-greater shearwater-alive).

Enclosed you will find the original Sea Turtle Life History (STLH) forms submitted by observers during the regular longline coverage. The POP will maintain copies of the STLH forms in our files until you have completed your data review or entry. I strongly recommend that you return the original STLH forms with any changes (in red and initialed) to the POP staff when you have completed your review.

In addition to the POP reporting of Protected Resource (PR) species recorded during observed longline fishing, observers have been requested to inspect the turtle handling and dehooking gear available aboard the vessels as a requirement of the 2004 Biological Opinion (BO). As a requirement of the BO tasking for the Miami Laboratory, I am providing you with copies of the Miami PR Turtle Gear check list form either filled out by the observer or by POP staff during debriefing from 17 observed vessels. Although it is not clear how this information will be processed, the originals will remain on file in the observer office, room 314. Finally, neither the Turtle Take Estimates (TTE) nor the Net Mortality Ratio (NMR) mentioned in the 2004 BO are provided as our program staffing does not have the expertise to conduct these analyses.

Attachments

Table of the Incidental Take summary for third quarter of 2004 by geographical area and sets observed; original STLF forms and associated turtle photographs for regular longline coverage; and copies of the Turtle Gear check list forms.

cc: Cheryl Brown; Gerry Scott, Jim Bohnsack (cover letters only).

Table 1: Percent coverage (by sets),the incidental take of Protected Resource species (turtles, mammals, seabirds), and hook effort summarized by geographical area for July 1 - September 30, 2004. (A=Alive, D=Dead, LB=Leatherback,LH=Loggerhead, U=unknown). (**Table revised 11/8/04**)

AREA	REQUIRED		TURTLES				MAMMALS		BIRDS	
	TOTAL SETS OBSERVED	8% COVERAGE	A	D	LB/LH/U		A	D	A	D
CAR-1	0	0	0/ 0/ 0	0		0	0		0	0
GOM-2	86(6%)	117	5/ 1/ 0	0		0	0		0	0
FEC-3	11(9%)	10	0/ 0/ 0	0		0	0		0	0
SAB-4	14(7%)	15	0/ 0/ 0	0		0	0		0	0
MAB-5	23(7%)	28	3/ 1/ 0	0		1	0		1	4
NEC-6	22(6%)	27	0/ 4/ 0	0		1	0		0	0
<u>NED-7</u>	<u>54(14%)</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>13/ 8/ 0</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	210(7+%)	229	21/14/ 0	0		3	0		1	4

Hook effort Summary:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Hook effort</u>
CAR	0
GOM	67,804
FEC	5,197
SAB	4,842
MAB	14,621
NEC	15,870
NED	<u>60,957</u>
TOTAL	169,291